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Please send any comments, questions, or corrections to:

editor@flyc.us

Commodore's Comments

by Mike Sidell

SV Delta G

It's hard to believe that August is here already.... I hope you're enjoying this fast-moving season and finding time to enjoy Seneca Lake.

We share the waters of the marina with a lot of different people: sailors and powerboat slip holders, transient dock visitors, folks using the public dock to put their boats in, hand-powered boaters, and boating visitors just checking out the marina. Among these groups is a wide range of skill levels, from those enjoying their first time ever in a boat to highly skilled captains. I've recently spoken with people from each of these categories and believe we slip holders share a responsibility to be helpful and welcoming to our water visitors.

I've unfortunately witnessed several incidents lately where this hasn't been the case. For example, a family who had rented a boat up-lake was caught by an unexpected storm and sought shelter at the marina. They had never been to the marina before and didn't know its layout. They didn't have lines or bumpers on the boat (which is another problem I hope they brought up with the business that rented them the boat). They didn't mean to, but got in the way of a sailboat trying to dock. They were met with anger and words not suitable for young kids to hear. What impression of our marina was left with them?

In another instance, I noticed a couple trying to bring their powerboat into the public dock. They needed an extra hand to help them fight a strong wind. Several boaters on shore stopped their conversation to watch, but none offered them any assistance. While I know these are isolated situations, I want to remind



everyone to be helpful, courteous, and responsible members of our marina.

Here are a few reminders that I hope you'll consider:

1. Remember that not everyone is a skilled boater. Some may, in fact, be new to boating.
2. Remember how it felt when you were a newbie boater.
3. Lend a hand (and a line) if you're able to.
4. If you aren't sure if your help is needed, ask.
5. Foul language isn't helpful or necessary to get your point across, especially with kids involved.
6. Smile and be encouraging to all visitors.

See you dockside!

- Mike
Slip 433

Addendum

By Nancy Sidell

SV Delta G

Mike and I had the pleasure of visiting the Lake Hopatcong Yacht Club (LHYC) in New Jersey in June. Our niece lives near the lake and told us about an antique boat show hosted by the Lake Hopatcong Chapter of the Antique and Classic Boat Society (ACBS), located at the LHYC. We decided to combine visiting Manda and Pete with the ACBS show, and we had a great time. We showed our 1956 Flying Fish, *Hot Diggity*. The yacht club featured a wonderful old building complete with covered veranda, a full-service bar, and excellent restaurant. It was clear that there was a lot of history there, evidenced by the photos displayed on the walls. To top off the weekend, *Hot Diggity* was awarded the Commodore's Choice Award. It may have helped that Mike was seen schmoozing with the Commodores. Undeterred by their crisp uniforms, Mike told them that he had the weekend off and didn't have his duds with him. Rest assured your Commodore held his own and represented us well.

- Nancy



Figure 1: Hot Diggity in the boat parade at the ACBS show.



Figure 2: The Commodores.

Vice Commodore's Comments

by John Chesbrough

SV Plein Air

Adventures Under Sail



H.W. Tillman wrote at least fifteen books about his adventures all over the world as a mountaineer and a sailor. One of his objectives in sailing was to access mountains that were

accessible only by sea and had never been climbed. The book attributed to him that I've read, "Adventures Under Sail," is a collection of selected pieces, many from his other books, posthumously published with his niece's help.

Harold William Tillman, born 1898, served in both World Wars, travelled the world and different mountain ranges, lived two years in Kenya, and started serious sailing in 1955. His favorite boat type was the famous Bristol Channel Pilot Cutter, of which he had three in succession as each boat had to be replaced after being crushed by Arctic ice. With over 140,000 miles sailing in either Arctic or Antarctic waters, in 1977 he set out from Rio de Janeiro not to be seen again. His last writings alluded to the sailing difficulties associated with old age.

This book describes several of his trips to polar waters and islands, most lasting four to six months with one going almost a year. Getting a crew together didn't prove difficult as the voyages promised free transportation, free food, free adventure, and free hard work. Tilman often describes how heavy weather, frequent dense fog, rain, and long hours of darkness made it difficult to get a good sextant reading. Being unsure of their location would sometimes lead to frayed nerves on the crew's part. The best parts of the book, however, are when Tilman discusses his sailing strategies and choices for certain specific situations including strong wind or the confusion of currents in Magellan's Strait or deciding how to safely spend a night among ice by tying off to a berg big enough to block wind.

Port Tacks

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In June 1964, on a trip along the east side of Greenland, they opted to sail east toward Iceland to see a newly created volcanic island named Surtsey, named after Surtur, a fire god in Norse mythology, 63' 18"N. 20' 36"W. The baby island started out as half a mile long by 250' high. By June, when Tilman decided to set foot ashore, the island was one mile by 550'. Anchoring proved impossible as "the shore shelved steeply...the anchor slid off the ash...holding ground no better than a heap of flour." While the vessel simply drifted, the skipper and one other dinged ashore. The shore was composed of reddish black sand and pumice which made climbing and hiking slow and exhausting but they were proud to be the first Brits to set foot on Surtsey. In October, Tilman learned that the peak was up to 800'.

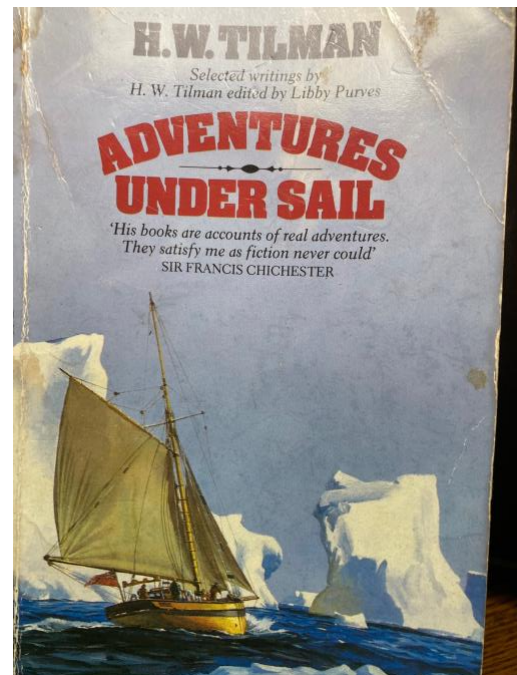
During one of his Antarctic voyages, he set out for Kerguelen Island east-south-east of the Cape of Good Hope. Along the way, they stopped at a small uninhabited island to hunt for dinner. Directing the volunteer to fetch a cormorant. He returned with two penguins since he was a geologist not a birder, but when asked, "Why two?" When asked, he answered that "one got in the way." Kerguelen Island at that time had a French naval base where the crew of *Mischief* (Tilman's boat at that time) were treated like royalty and shown that the French have an agreeable way with food. The French base had greenhouses galore and plenty of livestock in pigs, sheep, goats, and cattle as well as abundant fresh fish. Tilman made their visit short lest his crew become docile. In later trips in the southern ocean, a British base and a Chilean base were very disappointing in comparison.

This book has something for everyone: lots of quick witted British humor, convincing descriptions of

meal times and food prepared by someone not trained as a cook but determined to put in as much variety as possible. Tilman's description of the boat interior would make you think it was a much bigger vessel. At least twice the crew had to remove the two tons of ballast to be able to float off a rock or get off a beach. Sail repair at sea with needle and palm guard while fighting stubborn salt water soaked muslin, this is what you do while hove to.

I recommend this book to anyone who can get it from Don Swanson whom I gave it to.

- John



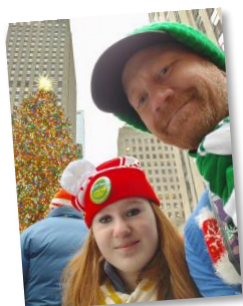
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Rear Commodore's Comments

by Bill Trondsen

SV Ellawicious

Racing Activity Update



Ahoy Fellow Sailors! Reporting on the flurry of Racing activity since the June report...

Rust Removal Race (5/31) - As the water levels pushed back our Calendar of events, the Rust Removal Race (RRR) was our season opener on the last weekend in May. I believe we

cancelled the Saturday event and moved it to Sunday due to lack of wind. The Windy App forecast on Sunday was not looking great, but we put out the two usual marks and the wind was building nicely from the North as the race start approached. We decided to attempt extra laps and were rewarded with some strong wind and excellent sailing. From the race report, Wind was a Force 4 and the number of boats competing was four.

Race #1 (6/6) - Went off well with eight boats and a consistent North wind strength of Force 3. Two new boats have joined the fray (*Luna Sea* and *Champagne Problems*). Welcome to the fleet!!!

Commodore's Cup Race (6/13) - A severe weather report for Friday resulted in our friends from SYC cancelling their trip down on Friday. The fleet got an early 9AM start, and proceeded to raise spinnakers to take advantage of a South-ish breeze. But the wind was not to last... The fleet inched along all morning and into the afternoon, barely reaching Peach

Orchard Point. The race was abandoned around 3PM to motor north for the celebratory picnic. The hospitality was amazing at SYC including firing up the grill and an extensive spread of salads, sides, and desserts. We had a pleasant night, and awoke to a very strong South wind, and bashed waves while motoring the whole way home.

Race #2 (6/27) - Seven boats entered the race. North Wind was very light with strength of Force 1. *Brewster* pulled away early and was the only vessel to round the marks and head back to finish. The rest of the fleet bobbed around near the Hector Falls mark as time limits expired.

Race #3 (7/4) - The Race Committee ventured out to place marks in the usual locations. A series of unfortunate events unfolded, and the race for the day was cancelled. (See article to follow...).

Race #3 (7/11) - A strong North Wind with strength of Force 4 was to bless our race day today. Nine boats entered, and we decided to add extra laps to take advantage of conditions. The strong wind caused some sail damage to one vessel, and the mark at the Salt Plant was in a difficult location and resulted in several groundings. All boats were able to make it back safely to race another day.

Thanks for your attention, and will see you at the next event!

Cheers!

- Bill

FLYC Season Overall Results - 2026

Unofficial Results

Non-FLYC Boat		Throw-Outs																
		Date ->	6/6	6/27	7/4	7/11	8/8	8/22	9/5	9/19	6/13	5/30	7/25	10/3	10/10			
		# Boats ->	7	7	9						5	4	6			6.3		
Boat	Owner	Type	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Race #4	Race #5	Race #6	Race #7	Race #8	Com Cup	Rust Rem	CoW	Harv est	Gear Bust	Total		
Ellawicious	Bill Trondsen	Pearson 26	1	7	4						5	1	1			19		
Brewster	Jim McGinnis	Hunter 336	6	1	10						5	8	2			32		
Tomfoolery	Tom Alley	Alberg 35	4	7	1						5	8	8			33		
Luna Sea	Ryan Crouse	Catalina 25	2	7	2						8	8	8			35		
Voyager	Tom Keebler	CS 30	8	8	3						5	8	3			35		
Champagne Problem	Katie Alley	C&C 25 MkII	3	8	5						8	8	8			40		
Skylark	Don Swanson	Sea Sprite 30	8	7	9						5	8	4			41		
Loiz	Russ Nelson	Freedom 25	7	7	10						8	4	6			42		
Zephyr	Kris West	Hunter 306	8	8	10						8	2	8			44		
Dry White	John O'Brien	Pearson 28-2	8	8	9						8	4	8			45		
Sweetest Thing	Chad Vigil	O'Day 28	5	7	10						8	8	8			46		
Stargazer	Bob Hansen	Dark Harbor 17	8	8	9						8	8	5			46		
Sonsie	Tony Kutysa	Cal 28-2	8	8	9						8	8	8			49		

Secretary's Column

by Katie Alley

Halftime Recap



It has been a novel summer, being my first owning my own racer-cruiser! Having my own boat has allowed me to participate in yacht club happenings in new ways, perhaps more independently from my father. (Although I could argue I've become a whole boat-load more

annoying to him with all of the repairs I've been recruiting help for. Now he's got HIS boat and MY boat to diagnose and treat. But it's supposed to be fun, right?)

The Racing Scene

Our first attempt for Race #1 on June 6th came with trials and tribulations. While setting the race mark, *S/V Brewster* tangled the mark's line in her prop. Multiple people went swimming in the cool water with sharp objects to try and free it, unsuccessfully. Sailing back into the marina in a south wind proved fruitless. While preparing *S/V Tomfoolery* to leave the marina and provide a tow, Captain Tom blew out his back bending over to pick up a dock line. He had me, Maggie MacBlane, and another friend of ours as crew, so we proceeded with motoring out to help *Brewster*.

Upon our return, all of the shoreside help flocked to Dock 5 to assist *Brewster*. Captain Tom could not stand up at the helm to steer us into our slip, so our docking was less than ideal. Maggie was on the bow with a line. I turned back to look at the stern (which was not where it was supposed to be), and then when I turned forward again, Maggie was dangling from the gunwale, accepting defeat and sliding into the water. My reaction in this man overboard situation was to look at my best friend and ask, "What are you doing?"

In retrospect, I should have taken the helm and forced Captain Tom to be ballast. This is also a great reminder to not step over the lifelines while docking, since that's what Maggie did. She is a merchant

SV Champagne Problems

mariner, so I was not concerned about her ability to stay afloat, hence my nonchalant reaction. Securing the boat and immediately deploying the swim ladder was the correct move. She had some significant bruising on her arm and a few cuts from the fall, but was okay. Needless to say, we did not race that day!



Figure 3: First aid aboard *S/V Tomfoolery* for the wounded crews.

Race #1 (take 2) on June 27th ended up being my maiden voyage aboard *S/V Champagne Problems*, with former owner Tony Kutyna aboard as crew. We had a light but steady north wind for me to get more acquainted with my boat out on the high seas. I had the best resource aboard as well! Despite a few hiccups, we came out on the podium with a corrected 3rd place finish.

Race #2 on July 4th started with a light but okay north wind that dissipated and disappointed most of the fleet, except for *Brewster*, who stuck it out and earned a first place finish.



Figure 4: Rainbow over Dock 4 on July 4th!

Race #3 proved the power of an internet presence to the club! A sailor named Brian visiting from Florida reached out virtually and asked to join one of our races. On July 11th, he crewed with Captain Tom aboard *Tomfoolery*. The healthy north wind (~12 knots) proved beneficial for the full-keeled boat, and the crew brought her to a 1st place finish! Safe to say the Florida man knew what he was doing!



Figure 5: Aboard S/V Champagne Problems during Race #3.

Fair Winds, Chad

On July 25th, our club bid farewell to our member, fellow racer, and friend, Chad Vigil with a small going-away party. Chad, skipper of *S/V Sweetest Thing*, accepted a job promotion and moved on to bigger waters in Virginia. His beloved O'Day has a new home port in the Chesapeake Bay. We sent him off on a high note with cupcakes. We'll miss his laugh most of all!



Figure 6: Chad's Party!

Boater's Weekend - Summer Rendezvous

This past weekend, FLYC joined ABC-FLX for our annual Boater's Weekend. This year, we opted to travel to Lodi Point. Many years ago, this used to be our club's destination for the Commodore's Cup. I haven't been there since I was in middle school, so it was exciting to return, aboard my boat too!



Figure 7: Starting off - Tomfoolery retrieves and delivers my kayak that freed itself from its tow line a mere few feet into the fairway.



Figure 8: Tomfoolery anchored and Champagne Problems rafted off. Captain Tom thinks he got me out of his hair but turns out I'm still right there. It's like adjoining hotel rooms.

Friday's winds only consisted of light circulation from the north, so most of us ended up motoring the entire way to Lodi. This was a true test of my new-to-me 2-stroke outboard and my new autopilot.



Figure 9: Friday evening's picnic on the Point! A huge thank you to the McGinnis's for grilling excellent chicken thighs. All the sides and desserts were great too!



Figure 10: The fleet (from L to R): Brewster, Plein Air, Voyager, Tomfoolery, Champagne Problems. Not pictured to the east: Skylark.



Figure 11: The cornhole competition was a hit! From L to R: Tom Alley's beer, Charlie Fausold, Margaret Radek, Jim West, Jim McGinnis.

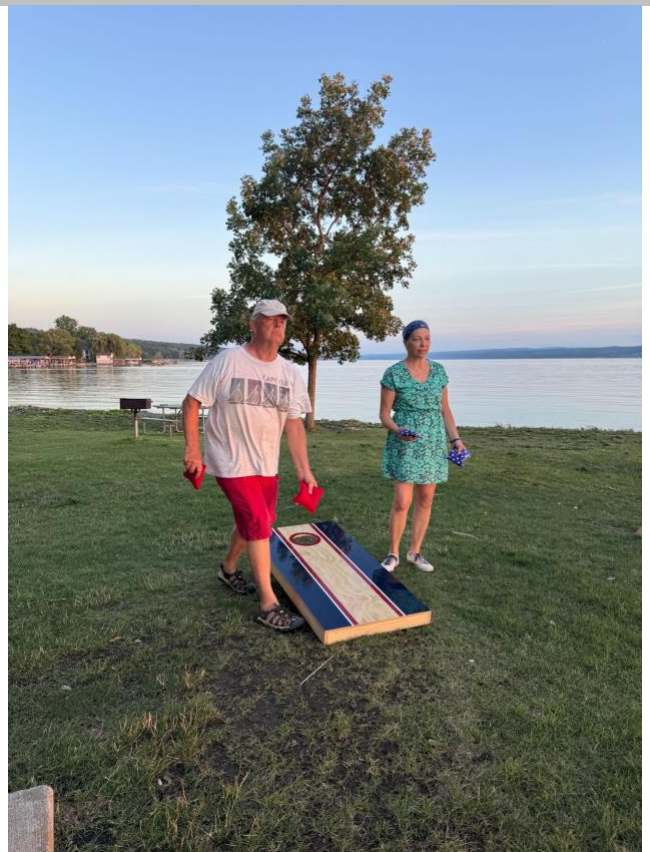


Figure 12: From L to R: Don Swanson, Kris West, Tom Keebler, John Chesebrough.

Figure 13: It got competitive! The final round underway with a close score. Jim McGinnis and Don Swanson come out on top!



Figure 14: The fleet at sunset.

The rest of the fleet headed across the lake to Plum Point Lodge. I had my first single-handed sail (under jib only), and it was great! My anemometer read 20 knots at one point and there were waves about 2 feet tall in the middle of the lake. They splashed up into my cockpit. This quick ride was enough for me to gain some more confidence in the boat and in myself. We had brunch at the lodge's restaurant, *Sapalta* (formerly known as Rainbow Cove). They painted the whole place my favorite color! The food was unique and absolutely delicious as well.



Figure 15: Phelps West brings me his ball AND a stick! He loved Lodi!



Figure 16: Sapalta/Plum Point Lodge.

A south wind picked up significantly overnight, creating a choppy anchorage and some troubles for some of our fleet. *S/V Plein Air* and *S/V Voyager* opted to return home. My raft-up situation worked out perfectly fine, other than listening to my traveler creek and slap back and forth all night.



Figure 17: (From L to R:) Brewster, Skylark, Tomfoolery, and Champagne Problems at Plum Point. S/V Ellawicious joined us later on, too!

Jim McGinnis and Tom Alley, on behalf of ABC-FLX, led the *Anchoring with Assurance* seminar at the dock, which was very well presented and attended. They shared some useful tips that will come in handy for our next trip to Lodi.



Figure 18: Anchor demonstration. This picture would also be a great heavy-metal/rock album cover. Get on that, Jim and Tom!

Next, the fleet traveled less than a mile north to Miles Winery. The wind had died down at this point. The winery's dock and shoreside bar appeared to be a very popular spot, with powerboats coming and going and the tables filled with visitors. The dock was full and our group had to anchor nearby.



Figure 19: Jim McGinnis motoring his dinghy toward Champagne Problems and Skylark rafted together, ready to taxi us to the bar.



Figure 20: A new friend at the winery!

With inclement weather in the forecast for Sunday, the fleet opted to travel home that evening. Unfortunately, my outboard got tired and eventually gave up on the ride home. I did say my goal for this weekend was to make it with my boat *TO* the events, not necessarily back, so I did accomplish what I wanted to! My patient father and *Tomfoolery's* solid diesel towed me about 11 miles home to Dock 3.



Figure 21: My dad's favorite extra 4,000 lbs of gear to tow. Thank you, Tomfoolery.

I owe a special thank you to Kris West, who accompanied me on several legs of the cruise! She was a helpful hand who kept me confident in my abilities to maneuver and coach my outboard to keep going.

Tests will be run, hopefully a diagnosis will be made, and options will be weighed regarding my biggest

champagne problem of all, the elderly 2-stroke outboard. Having a reliable engine will give me so much more peace of mind on future cruises.

It is very easy to get overwhelmed with how much more there is to fix and add to a “new” boat. However, it’s important to look back and appreciate all the improvements I’ve put in so far. Surely the second half of summer will provide me with more opportunities to learn, work, and sail!

Other Announcements/Reminders



Figure 22: S/V True Love sails past the marina breakwall.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for *S/V True Love's* 100th birthday party at Lucky Hare Brewing in the marina on September 25th and 26th!



Figure 23: Anchor Stewart

Rest in Peace: The beloved, 3-pound chihuahua, Anchor, who became a marina-icon, sadly passed away in June. We will never forget this sassy and sweet lady! FLYC sends condolences to Terry and Lisa Stewart.

- Katie, FLYC Secretary

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You can follow Katie and what she's up to on Facebook at "Katie Alley Art" or on Instagram at @katiealleyart.

To avoid burnout, try the 30-30 rule. Work for 30 minutes, then move onto a sailboat for the next 30 years. Works every time.



A Series of Unfortunate Events...

By Don "Lemony Snicket" Swanson

SV Skylark



Figure 24: An accurate representation of the race committee by the end of the day courtesy of AI.

In a typical season of sailing, a bit of misfortune is to be expected. A broken halyard, a torn sail, or a stubbed toe is occasioned by all of us at one time or another. But what if we could somehow compress it all into a single day or even a few hours? Imagine a season's worth of troubles being dispatched in one fell swoop. Obviously, we couldn't, nor wouldn't want it to be the case, but to the Race Committee it really happened. In just a couple hours, the members of your faithful race committee suffered from a series of truly unfortunate events as we attempted to prepare for the first Summer Series race of 2026. This is our story.

It was early June, the 6th to be precise. The start of the season was finally sputtering along after delays in launching due to high lake levels. In short, we were all looking forward to another circuit around the buoys.

As usual, the Race Committee met (minus Tom..., he'll play his role later on) at 1100 to set out on *Brewster* to place marks. The lake was mostly calm, with a light south-easterly wind slowly filling in. The forecast was calling for 8-12 knots from the SW. We

were hopeful, but not fully expecting good racing conditions.

All was looking good as we motored to Salt Point to place the west mark, which we did without a hitch. Cats' paws and wind lines were visible on the lake and, as we motored to Hector Falls, the wind continued to build and veer to the SW. We deployed the east mark just below Hector Falls Point and were ready to head back..., and then it happened; our first mishap.

Jim put *Brewster* in gear and whoop! The engine conked out. We fouled the prop with the buoy anchor rode! After uttering a few "diagnostic terms of analysis" we sprang into action. The first course of action was to deploy *Brewster's* bow anchor. As it was, we were in about 50 feet of water and were quickly drifting north onto the lee shore of Hector Falls Point. Mercifully, the anchor grabbed but barely, and as we attempted to free the prop we inextricably dragged closer and closer to the shore and thin water. One of us was going to have to dive in.

I volunteered to take the first crack at freeing the line, so while I steeled my nerves for what lay ahead, we deployed the Life Sling and had some additional flotation pads on the ready.

Splash. I made three attempts (sans mask) and with a knife managed to cut a little line off the prop shaft. During all this activity and with the adrenaline pumping, I suddenly took notice of some blood on the swim platform. Wait, there's more. It's me! Turns out somehow, I still don't know – maybe on the prop or even the knife itself – but I manage to do a number on myself and inflicted three nasty cuts to my fingers and thumbs.

While I emptied *Brewster's* first aid kit and depleted the paper towel supply, Bill was the next victim. Thankfully, he suffered no lacerations, but was ultimately unable to extricate the errant line. By now, we had nearly run aground (I had glanced at the depth meter and saw it read zero) but luckily we never hit the bottom. We unfurled the headsail, pulled on the anchor line to bring it in and with so much as a whisper somehow managed to get away from the shore and out into the lake where we raised the main and started south on a SSW wind that had stiffened and was shifting and gusting to 18 or 20 knots with lulls of 2-3 knots.

With these variable conditions it made the ride back all the more interesting. And by now, we were quickly approaching 1300, when we usually hold the skippers pre-race meeting. Our absence was being noticed and soon contact with shore via cell phone was underway. Our plan was to sail into the marina but the wind foiled our efforts by shifting and locking in from the south - smack on the nose and likely to put us in irons when we really needed maneuverability. Time to call in the cavalry and get a tow.

After a brief phone call to arrange a tow, the crack crew of *Tomfoolery* kicked into high gear to rescue our wayward souls. Relieved to know help was on the way, we put *Brewster* onto a beam reach and started tacking east and west while waiting. And waiting. And waiting... Where were they?

Little did we know, the next unfortunate event had just taken place and now all four members of the race committee were in the maelstrom of misfortune. And more was yet to come.

After coordinating with Tom Alley and Kris West, we had a plan. Tom and his crew would tow in *Brewster* and a ready group of sailors (Kris and company) were preparing to catch us at the end of Dock 5.

While we tacked back and forth, Tom and his crew began readying for departure. Unplug the shore power and cast off the leeward lines. Engine running. And then Tom bent over to reach for a dock line. Just a simple little dock line, and zing! Tom's back was having none of it and rebelled. As Tom later recalled "there was a flash of light and a stab of pain in my lower back... went down on my knees and wound up on all fours with a group of spasms."

With the help of his able crew (Katie A. and her friends, Katie C. and Maggie M.), Tom was able to prop himself up in the cockpit on some flotation cushions where he would remain mostly immobilized for the next couple hours. With her competent and helpful crew on hand, *Tomfoolery* was finally underway and the towing rescue was accomplished. *Brewster* successfully made it to Dock 5 and our heroes proceeded to their home slip when the final unfortunate event occurred.

As *Tomfoolery* proceeded to her slip, the final turn didn't go very well. The south wind wasn't helping them either and as they nosed into their slip the boat began drifting north toward the piling and end of the finger dock shared with a neighboring boat. That's when Maggie stepped over the lifelines with the intention of stepping onto the dock (only a couple of feet away) but instead she slipped off of the gunwale and went into the drink between the boat and dock. Katie A. saw it and later recounted that it looked deliberate, although Maggie insists it wasn't. Katie shouted "Maggie, what are you doing?" and that's when the rest of the crew saw her in the water and realized they had a MOB. To add to our collective woes, Maggie was now drenched and got a little hurt when her arm smacked against the gunwale on her way overboard. After recovery, Maggie was no worse for wear other than a few scrapes and bruises. Nevertheless another victim was added to the tally on a rather unfortunate day.

In the end, it was quite a tally. *Brewster* and Tom were essentially crippled, Don cut to shreds, and Maggie banged up a bit. Of the four that took a swim (Jim would later dive on *Brewster* while docked), all

were fine despite being wetted by 48°F water. No hyperthermia, but not exactly a spa treatment either. But fear not. My cuts healed. *Brewster* was freed successfully of her encumbrances (after a short haul) and suffered no lasting damage. Tom's back mended and Maggie, though banged up a bit, had her pride bruised no worse than her arm.

And the race? It was an easy call which the race committee (a.k.a., the walking wounded) was unanimous in deciding. Cancelled. That's what make up days are for!

Post Mortem Analysis

From now on, we will always deploy marks off the windward side of the boat... so that the boat can drift downwind before engaging the prop.

It's always a good idea to have a diving mask on board and a good rigging knife.

As sailors we lean towards self sufficiency, but sometimes the best course of action is to reach out for assistance. Had we called for a tow earlier we may have avoided later misfortunes, though there's no way to know.

Stay on the boat when docking. Avoid jumping onto the dock as a boat is moving.

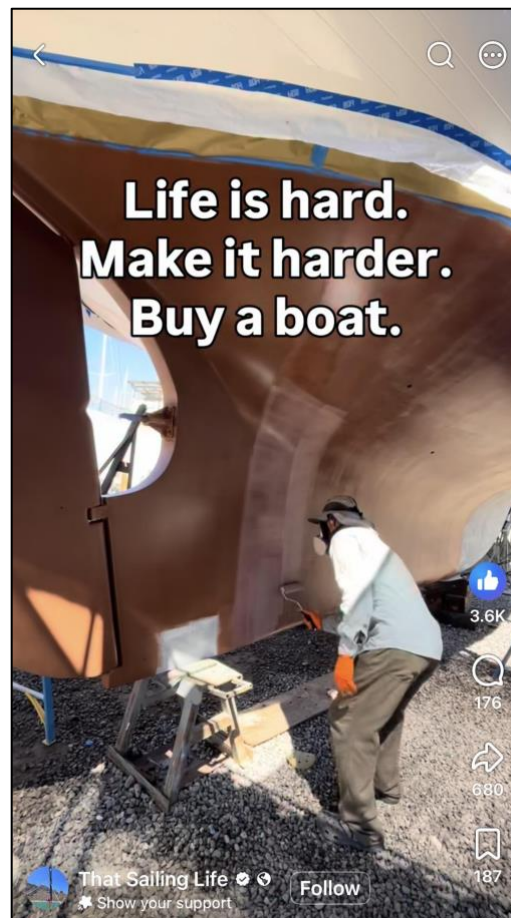
Keep a well stocked first aid kit on your boat and learn basic first aid skills. (Note: We had everything we needed, but this point is always worth mentioning).

Be safe out there, folks.

Cheers!

- Don

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Observations of Spinnakers

By Russell Nelson

SV Lotz

I've noticed that spinnakers are not commonly used among FLYC sailors. They can be a bit specialized, useful only for running, a broad reach, or a (near) beam reach. I don't know everything about spinnakers, but I'll explain what I do know.

There are two kinds of spinnakers: symmetric and asymmetric. Symmetric are identical side to side, asymmetric is longer on the luff side. Symmetric always needs a pole between the two clews and a number of lines, asymmetric is simpler. Symmetric is best for running, and asymmetrical for reaching. Figure 26 shows a symmetric spinnaker (see the pole).

My boat uses a different kind of symmetric spinnaker, flown from a pole mounted in the center on the gun mount. See Figure 25. Like an ordinary symmetric, it has lines to two clews, but has two lines to each end of the pole, so the pole can be rotated around the center. In theory it also has two lines to move it back and forth, but I've had no luck doing that because of the friction when it's more than 30% to one side.



Figure 26: Example of a symmetric spinnaker.



Figure 25: Lotz's unique spinnaker rigging.



Figure 27: Example of an asymmetric spinnaker.

The symmetric spinnaker requires a pole to hold the two clews apart. One end of the pole is mounted on the mast, and so must be moved back and forth on each gybe. The outboard end of the pole has a guy to control the pole, and the tack of the sail is connected to it. The other corner, the clew, has the sheet, which controls the shape of the sail. When running, the spinnaker will be shaped like a parachute, giving the spinny its other name of “chute.”

The asymmetric doesn't need a pole. The tack is connected to the gun mount, or even further out using a bowsprit. (See Figure 27) Without a pole, it's easy to gybe, by releasing one sheet and hauling on the other. Because it's not symmetric, it is better suited for reaching.

- Russell

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Figure 28: Tomfoolery and Brewster race with their spinnakers during Race #1 on Seneca Lake.

Katie's Page Port

Book Reviews of Nautical Narratives

By Katie Alley

A recurring column where your secretary reviews a book with nautical themes.

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This Month's Review: *Adrift: Seventy-six Days Lost at Sea*

Author: Steven Callahan

Published: Originally published in 1986, I read the 2002 edition

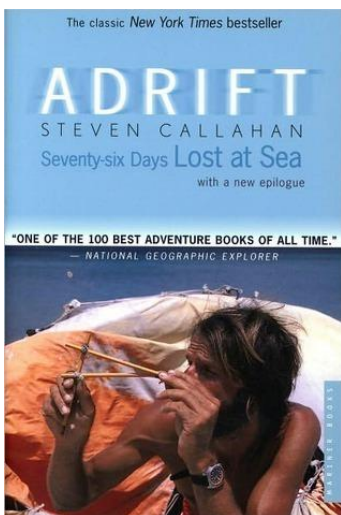


Figure 29: Image via Goodreads.

“...it is a view of heaven from a seat in hell.”

Where to even begin with this one! *Adrift: Seventy-six Days Lost at Sea* by Steven Callahan is a true memoir about Callahan's survival aboard a life raft crossing the Atlantic Ocean after his sailboat tragically sunk. I am in awe of Steven's story and admire his writing and respect for nature.

Summary

29-year-old Steven Callahan was exploring the world aboard *Napoleon Solo*, his 21-foot sloop that he designed and built himself. He intended to participate in the Mini-Transat 6.50 (a solo transatlantic race from Europe to the Caribbean), but unfortunately had to drop out of the race due to hull damage from an encounter with floating debris.

SV Champagne Problems

Callahan docked in La Coruna, Spain for repairs. On January 29th, he departed for Antigua, noting that the pilot charts indicated only a 2% chance of gales and building trade winds.



Figure 30: SV Napoleon Solo. Image via @steven._callahan on Instagram.

The first week was leisurely and *Napoleon Solo* was ahead of schedule. On February 4th, conditions changed. The wind built, clouds rolled in, and waves rose – a gale. That evening, Callahan left his autopilot on and crawled into his settee to rest, wearing only a t-shirt. Shortly before midnight, a deafening explosion thunders through the vessel and Callahan finds himself instantly waist deep in water. *Napoleon Solo* is sinking. There is no time to think - only act.

Approximately 800 miles west of the Canaries, 450 miles north of the Cape Verde Islands, and 450 miles east of the nearest shipping lane, Callahan watches his beloved sailboat sink from his life raft, which he affectionately names *Rubber Ducky III*. With limited supplies in the raft and his emergency duffel, he must survive an unknown amount of time until rescue.

The gale continues for three days. On February 6th - Callahan's 30th birthday - he wrote his own epitaph on dime-store three-by-five notepads. Little did he know this was only the beginning.

Callahan's knowledge, resourcefulness, and perseverance is quickly apparent. Within two weeks, he has learned to catch fish to eat using his speargun. He figures out how to use his tender solar stills - devices that use the sun's heat to purify saltwater through evaporation and condensation. He regularly scans the horizon for passing ships.

Survival is anything but easy. Fish constantly nudge and peck the bottom of the raft. Callahan notices the raft deteriorating in the sun and is frequently using a handpump to keep it inflated. At one point, a shark punches the bottom of the raft and lifts it completely out of the water. The weather varies - from stormy with 15-foot waves to no wind and baking sun. Callahan is covered in boils and abrasions from the constant saltwater in the raft. There is no relief from thirst, hunger, and fatigue. He grows weaker with the passing weeks.



Figure 31: Callahan's raft. Image via r/interestingasfuck on Reddit.

Navigationally, Callahan fixes his direction at sunrise and sunset using his copy of the book *Sea Survival* by Dougal Robertson, which contains tables of the sun's declination. He determines his heading from the North Star and Southern Cross: "The heavens have provided me with an unbreakable, immortal, fully guaranteed compass." Speed is estimated by the amount of time it takes a piece of seaweed to pass between the raft and the man

overboard pole on 70-foot of line behind him. Later, Callahan crafts a "low-budget sextant," using three pencils to measure latitude with the horizon, North Star, and compass rose on his chart.

Callahan's sense of humor shines through: "I couldn't get the idea of a McDonald's Quarter-Pounder McBarnacle Burger out of my mind." "It is also a little disconcerting to realize that *Ducky* is guaranteed for forty days of use. If she fails me now, do you suppose I can get my money back?"

A true low-point occurs for Callahan on day fifty-one. Over a week prior, a fish escaped with the head of his spear and tore a hole in the bottom of the raft, completely deflating the bottom tube. He worked endlessly trying to seal the leak with a foam plug, lines, patches, caulking, foam, sponges, and tourniquets, depriving himself of food and sleep. When the weather gets rough again, he accepts that he may die.

Finally, Callahan repairs the leak using a fork lashed perpendicularly through the raft and plugs. He creates a new spearhead using a leather blade and a butter knife. *Rubber Ducky* begins encountering new fish, different birds, and eventually, a large garbage patch.

On April 21st, day seventy-six, three fishermen spotted Callahan, thanks to the birds hovering over the raft and its mini ecosystem. Callahan allows them to finish fishing before taking him ashore on the island of Marie Galante.

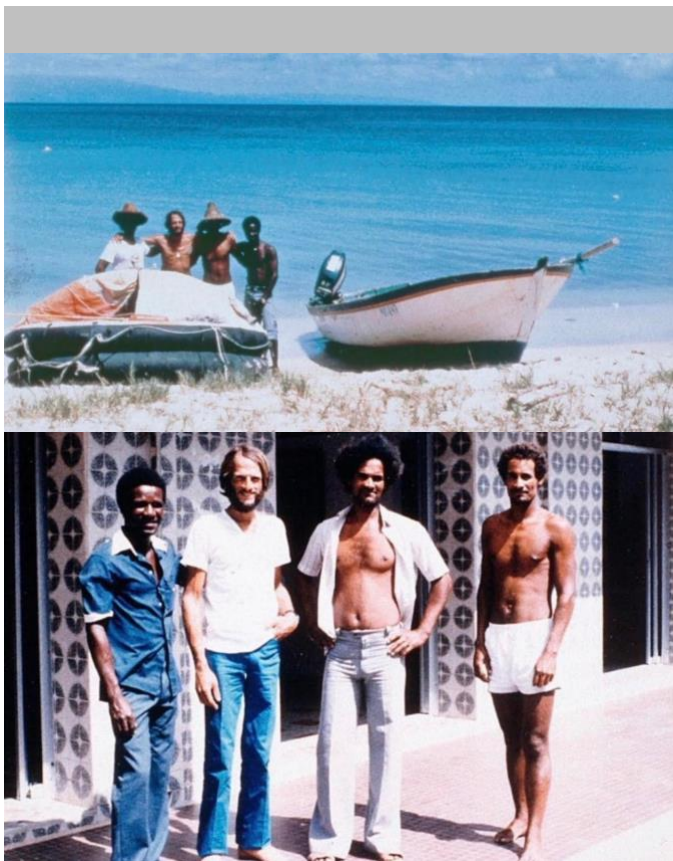


Figure 32: "I will forever be grateful for the men who saved my life: Jules Louis, Jean Louis, and Paulinus Williams." Caption and images via @steven._callahan on Instagram.

Callahan spent the next several weeks recovering on the island, where he had many visitors, including his parents. The islanders were incredibly generous and friendly. Callahan lost just under a third of his bodyweight, but was walking well within six weeks, and back to a normal weight and muscular build within six months.

He figured that *Napoleon Solo* must have struck something hard the night it sank, perhaps a whale. He survived by eating 12 dorados (mahi-mahi), 12 triggerfish, four flying fish, three birds, barnacles, and crabs. Nine ships passed *Rubber Ducky* but did not see her.

My Thoughts

Even though the reader knows from the start exactly when Callahan is rescued and that he survives, the story is still incredibly suspenseful. *Adrift* is written as if you are with Callahan in the raft. You feel every small win and glimmer of hope that he feels. You also feel the pain, exhaustion, and despair of every setback. You feel frustrated for him because you

want him to make it. You know he does make it - but how? That's what makes this book a page-turner.

Think about being in the middle of the ocean. Just blue sky, blue water. Nothing around you. Emptiness as far as the eye can see. Callahan was in a small raft with a diameter of only 5-feet 6-inches. Despite this, the book never gets boring. In my opinion, it moves at just the right pace - you feel how long each day was for Callahan but his journey keeps progressing. I was surprised at how detailed his account of each day was. The logs Callahan kept on his dime-store notepads were worthwhile.

Callahan's writing is very descriptive. He describes his survival techniques and includes detailed drawings of his raft and equipment. It gets a bit technical at times, but the diagrams help the reader picture it.

I think another reason why I enjoyed this book is because I really liked Callahan's personality and values. This book is literally his inner monologue while he was on the raft. Along with the excellent pacing, I think his writing balances reflection and action well. In order to survive, Callahan shared that he had one part of his mind acting as a captain, commanding the other parts of him that wanted to give up.

I really liked how Callahan wrote about sailing and the ocean. He is a humble man with great appreciation for the earth. He reflects on his respect and fascination with the water, how the Atlantic ocean made him feel insignificant yet a sense of purpose, and the gratification humans feel when overcoming a challenge. Here are a few of my favorite excerpts:

"I sometimes wonder if one of the major reasons for ocean racing and voyaging is to push one's self and one's boat just past the edge, watch things fail, and then somehow come up with a solution. In many ways, having a jury rig succeed is often more gratifying than making a pleasant and uneventful passage or even winning a race."

"The sea remains the world's greatest wilderness. To my mind, voyaging through wildernesses, be they full of woods or waves, is essential to the growth and maturity of the human spirit. It is in the wilderness that you really learn who you are. It is in facing the

challenges of the wilderness that the thickness of your wallet becomes irrelevant and your capabilities become the truer measure of your value."

"For the first time in my life I felt truly humbled. It is just another irony with which my tale is filled—the heartfelt realization of one's insignificance yields a calming sense of being completely connected to the greater whole. As a tiny part of the world and humanity, I now feel more at peace and much larger than I ever felt as a man alone."

I also really enjoyed how the dorados following Callahan's raft became characters of their own through his writing. He remarks that he knows the individual fish by their markings and the way they headbutt the raft. He believes the dorados have a superior spirit to his. While humans ponder truth and meaning, the fish find them immediately just by swimming, chasing each other, and escaping the spearhead. I really loved how the fish were friends, caregivers (by providing food), and the enemy at times (i.e. when the raft was torn).



Figure 33: "Showing the people of Marie Galante how I fished for dorados." Caption and image via @steven._callahan on Instagram.

Perhaps what is most admirable is the fact that Callahan continued to sail and cross oceans after his rescue. He has spent his life working on survival gear and designing life rafts. His time at sea helped him realize his legacy and what's important in life. "I only want to sail, write, and draw," he states. I think

I would get along with him. I want to internalize his determination and passion.



Figure 34: An older Steven Callahan at work. Image via @steven._callahan on Instagram.

Adrift comes with high recommendation to anyone who likes adventure stories, survival stories, or memoirs. If you would prefer to watch Callahan's story and listen to his account, he was featured on a 2006 episode of the TV show *I Shouldn't Be Alive*, which is available to [watch on Youtube for free](#). The episode is very well-done, with a talented actor recreating the scenes and Callahan's compelling interview.

I also found that Callahan's story was made into a full length documentary movie in 2024, *76 Days Adrift*, but I believe it is an indie film with limited screenings.

Key Takeaways for Mariners

- Always have respect for the water and realize its power. Callahan was very knowledgeable and well-equipped, but he almost did not survive because of how brutal the ocean was. He describes it as the world's largest desert.
- Be sure you have all the safety equipment you need and that it is properly maintained. Have a ditch bag for longer voyages, and a life raft when going any significant distance offshore.

- Katie

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True Love 100-Year Sailabration

Everyone is invited to join in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the iconic schooner *True Love* during a two-day, Seneca Lake waterfront event.

Friday, September 25th activities:

- 5pm – Beautiful classic wooden sailboats on display
- 5-6pm – Happy Hour at the Lucky Hare Brewing Bar & Grill
- 5-7pm – Sea shanties by Uncle Joe and Renee
- 7pm – Free outdoor showing of the classic film *High Society* with its cameo by the *True Love* and popular song, “True Love”

Saturday, September 26th activities:

- 10am – Opening ceremonies and blessing of the fleet
- 10am–5pm – *True Love* dockside tours, family activities, raffle, vendor booths, and info tables
- 12pm – Seneca Lake: Transportation Superhighway, a walking tour by the Schuyler County Historical Society



Figure 35: The schooner *True Love*, designed by John Alden and built in 1926.

- 1pm – Classic Sailboat Regatta
- 3pm – Heartfelt stories from former *True Love* owners and current owner, Terry Stewart
- 4pm – Transportation Superhighway walking tour and Lucky Hare Brewing beer barrel pull
- 5-8pm – Music by Analogue Sons

Honor the enduring legacy of the schooner *True Love* and enjoy a memorable weekend on the Seneca Lake waterfront!

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Figure 36: A double rainbow seen from one of the *True Love*'s cruises.

Editor's Corner

by Tom Alley



On Rest & Relaxation

The summer season is supposed to be all about rest and relaxation. “R&R,” in more colloquial terms. We’re supposed to be recharging our batteries

to get through the next non-boating season. As you read in Don Swanson’s article, R&R has taken on a slightly different meaning for a number of us: Recovery and Rehabilitation.

About 14 years ago, I herniated a disc in my lower back. While I could tell many exciting stories about the incident, all of them would be fallacious, or at least wildly inaccurate. Like many who injure their backs, it was done embarrassingly. No heroics. No lofty and virtuous actions. No rescues of kittens from a flaming building. No YouTube-worthy moments. In my case, I was simply fetching a bowl of ice cream from the freezer. (In my defense, it did have two scoops. And chocolate fudge. That has to count for something!). Since then, I manage to aggravate this injury every couple of years. Once or twice, I was picking up something heavy. The other events followed actions even less exciting than fetching ice cream. This time it was reaching to pick up a dock line. Something I do dozens of times every weekend. Why was this time different? I have no idea and my back isn’t telling me.

Regardless of the cause, when my back gets like this, I’m forced not to just slow down but to stop. Completely. Totally. As in, what-else-is-there-to-watch-on-Netflix-today level of activity. It’s frustrating. Forget about wishing to be 18 years old

SV Tomfoolery

again. I’ll settle for being 50! On the other hand, if 60-somethings had the energy and resilience of 20-year-olds, we’d probably get into a lot more trouble than we already do. I guess you can chalk this up to the wisdom of God’s grand design to keep us from killing ourselves after we’ve had time to think up some really stupid ideas. Without these limits, my last words would very likely be something like, “Hold my beer while I show you this...”

Boater Weekend Rendezvous

I’m writing much of this while anchored just off Lodi Point on Seneca Lake. It’s the annual rendezvous weekend with the Finger Lakes Chapter of America’s Boating Club. Prior events have taken place at the Samson Marina, but this year the organizers opted for a change of venue to keep things interesting. So far, the event has been worth the effort to attend and the weather has been perfect!

Web Site Updates

Work continues, but at a more relaxed rate. The team has slowed things down for a bit so we can all enjoy a little more time at the helm and less time behind a keyboard. The club web site is functioning well on the new server. Next steps will be to begin updating the content management system to a more current (and supported!) version.

- Tom

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Well, your editor has opened his big mouth again. If you wish to agree, or (more likely) to tell him he doesn’t know squat, please send your comments to editor@flyc.us.

2026 FLYC Calendar

Due to the delay in launching of boats because of high water levels, our club calendar has received a significant number of modifications. (See highlighted events below.) Please check the club web site (<http://www.FLYC.US>) for the most current information.

Regular/Repeating Events

Post-Mortem Racing Social. After every club race at 1700 on the lawn by the marina flagpole. BYOB/Snack to share. Open to racers and non-racers alike. Bragging and boasting mandatory.

March

27 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**

April

01 **April Newsletter Publication Date.**

15 **Earliest possible launch date** (per slip contract).

May

01 **Membership renewal deadline.**

08-10 **NASCAR at the Glen*

22 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**

24 **Memorial Day Flag Raising & Picnic.** (1700)

June

01 **June Newsletter Publication Date.**

06 **FLYC Nautical Swap Meet** (1000)

06 ~~**Rust Removal Race.** Practice race. (1300)~~

12 ~~**Commodore's Cup Pre-Race Social.** Racers from SYC have been invited to join us for dinner and campfire! BYOB (1700)~~

13 **Commodore's Cup Race.** Race from Watkins Glen to Geneva with our friends from SYC. (0900)

13 **Commodore's Cup Post-Race Celebration.** Hosted at the SYC club house.

20 **Watkins Glen Waterfront Festival & Cardboard Boat Races.*

27 **Summer Series Race #1.** (1300)

July

04 **Summer Series Race #2.** (1300)

04 **Independence Day Picnic.** (1700)

04 **Watkins Glen Independence Day Fireworks (2145)*

10-14 **Lake Ontario 300 Challenge, Port Credit, Ontario*

11 **Summer Series Race #3.** (1300)

18 **Summer Series Race #4.** (1300)

24 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**

25 **Cock of the Walk Race.** (1300)

31-8/02 **ABC-FLX Boater's Weekend. All FLYC members invited to join!*

August

7/31-02 **ABC-FLX Boater's Weekend.. All FLYC members invited to join!*

01 **August Newsletter Publication Date.**

08 **Summer Series Race #5.** (1300)

14-16 **Italian-American Festival (Watkins Glen)*

15 **Make-Up Race #2.** If needed. (1300)

15 **Commodore's Picnic.** (1700)

22 **Summer Series Race #6.** (1300)

29 **Handicapper's Special Race.** (1300)

September

05 **Summer Series Race #7.** (1300)

05 **Harvest Picnic.** (1700)

05-07 **Vintage Grand Prix Weekend*

11-13 **FLYC Club Cruise to Geneva.** Joint cruise with the ABC-FLX chapter.

12 **Seneca Yacht Club Barge Race, Geneva, NY (0900) All FLYC members invited! Preregistration required.*

12 **Geneva Cruise Social.** Held at SYC club house or at Seneca Marina Park grounds. Details TBA.

18 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**

19 **Summer Series Race #8.** (1300)

25-27 **SV True Love 100th Birthday Celebration*

October

01 **October Newsletter Publication Date.**

02-05 **Annapolis Powerboat Show.*

03 **Grape Harvest Race.** (1300) Join in this annual reverse-handicap race!

03 **End of Season Picnic.** (1700)

09-12 **Annapolis Sailboat Show.*

10 **Gear Buster Race** or **Make-Up Race #3**, if needed. (1300)

17 *Gear Buster Race alternate date. (1300)*

31 **Marina Haulout Deadline** (per slip contract).

November

TBA **Member Banquet & Annual Meeting.**

20 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**

December

01 **December Newsletter Publication Date.**

January 2027

22 **Deadline for newsletter articles.**

** Non-FLYC event.*

NOTE: There is a \$10 charge for non-members/guests attending FLYC picnics and meals.